

EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2008

East Greenwich High School Auditorium

300 Avenger Drive

East Greenwich, RI 02818

**ANY ITEMS CONSIDERED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MAY BE
SUBJECT TO A**

VOTE

The School Committee meeting was called to order at 7:10p.m. in the East Greenwich High School Auditorium. Members present were: Sue Cienki, Chair, Skip Day, Vice-chair, Anne Palumbo, Mary Ellen Winters, and Susan Records as well as Superintendent Charles Meyers, Director of administration, Maryanne Crawford, and Assistant Superintendent Helen O'Hara. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Mrs. Friedemann and Mrs. Guliano were absent.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Frank Cybulski, Behavior Teacher at Cole Middle School, spoke about his program and noted that he has worked with problem students for twenty-five years. He noted that most have gone to college and some to prison, but the program has met their needs. He stated that cutting this program could mean that the school department will pay now or pay later.

Kim Trupiano stated that East Greenwich parents are asking that no programs be cut for children. She stated that we can't watch

Barrington surpass us in test scores. She also stated that the Creative and Productive Thinking Program should not be cut.

Lori Koplik, CPT parent and teacher in East Greenwich, asked the Committee not to cut the program since students need that enrichment opportunity and it allows them to pursue their passions.

Rose Miner, CPR Parent, stated that the CPT parent group was founded in 1995, and it has funded programs, paid for busses, and provided small business loans for 5th grades. She added that it provides an invaluable opportunity for students. Andrew Miner, Caitlyn Mason, Caroline Fazio, Steve Bareto, Jennifer Condon, Bin Yu, Judy Johnson, Nancy Reed, and Monica Mason also spoke in favor of the CPT Program.

3. Recognition

3.1 Nicholas Ross, was recognized for being names Gatorade player of the year for Cross Country.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 On a motion made by Mr. Day and seconded by Mrs. Palumbo, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Executive Session minutes for February 11 and 12, and regular session minutes for February 11, 2008.

5. New Business

5.1 Appointments

Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to approve the spring coaches at Cole and the high school. Mrs. Records recused herself from the vote. The motion passed.

5.1.1 High School Spring Coaches

Robert Downey, head boys' baseball, Matthew Records, assistant boys' baseball

Robert Petrucci, head girls' softball, Lisa MacFarlane, assistant girls' softball

Peter Fitzpatrick, head boys' tennis, Marc Brocato, head co-ed golf

Charlotte Evasick, head boys' track and field

5.1.2 Cole Spring Coaches

Douglas Haynes, head varsity baseball

Richard Glover, head varsity softball

Joseph Amato, Intramural Wrestling Coach at Cole Middle School

6. Teacher lay-offs and non-renewals

Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to approve the teacher layoffs and non-renewals for the 2008-2009 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Budget Hearing FY 09

Mr. Meyers gave a power point presentation with budget numbers. He stated that the budget will increase by 4.6%, or a 1.4 million increase. Mrs. Cienki stated that the town and schools are looking into consolidation and Mrs. Records is looking into other areas of consolidation.

Ellen Shanos, stated that she supports the music program and music is important in education because it is part of the fabric of our

society. She also noted that the Frenchtown Librarian, Donna Hayes, does an amazing job. She feels that the \$6 million field's budget is a huge amount since we are cutting teachers.

Maura Meiser stated that she is disappointed with the work to rule situation and noted that no other state in the country does work to rule. She stated that we can't cut vital programs.

Jane Donegan is concerned about the short list of cuts such as CPT and Chorus. She asked that the short list be changed to items in flux.

Mr. Anthony Baro spoke about an article in the Providence Journal concerning school and non-school payroll. He stated that the place to cut is with the town budget, and that budget should be scrutinized to come in line with other town budgets in the state.

Kim Hare, stated that she supports both the teachers and School committee but feels her kids are being affected.

Sandra White-Bacon can't believe that chorus and a librarian are in the short list. She feels we are shutting down doors to the computer lab also when we cut a librarian.

Mr. Meyers stated that because of the maximum allowable increase, this is what the Committee is up against. He noted that we will be facing this every year until the state passes a funding formula.

Christine Mattos stated that we have to balance our priorities. She asked each Committee member if they support the CPT Program. All members said yes and Mrs. Records stated that she supports every educational program.

Jody Sceery asked for a line item budget to be put on the website.

Robin Leshing stated that it is upsetting to see basic programs being

cut. She would like to see items not directly related to students put on the short list.

Mrs. Pat Rakovic, East Greenwich Teacher, asked about generating grant money and in-kind services. Mrs. Cienki stated that the finance committee volunteers are talking about an East Greenwich Foundation. She also noted that there are a lot of grants for which we don't qualify.

8. Withdrawal of surplus funds from WB Community Health

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Mrs. Crawford stated that we have an \$800,000 surplus but we can only access a percentage. She noted that we are self-insured and we want to keep the rate increases low. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to take \$150,000 out of our surplus with WB Community Health (\$50,000 which would go against the lunch program, and \$100,000 to set up a capital improvement fund.) The motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Crawford will notify West Bay Community Health.

9. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Records to approve the out-of-state field trip to Washington, D.C. for 8th grade students for Project Close-Up from May 4-7, 2008. It was noted that there will be approximately forty-five students, three parent volunteers, a school secretary and the assistant principal. The motion passed unanimously.

10. School Committee Concerns

It was noted that North Kingstown wants to set up a full School Committee meeting to pursue cross-districting savings and would

like to do this within the next month.

Mrs. Records would like a debate over the lawyer fees.

Mr. Day thanked Mr. Meyers and the faculty at the high school for the great job over the last few days.

Mrs. Cienki noted that the Drama Program at Cole, The Wiz, will be held at the high school on Saturday and Sunday, March 1 and 2.

The following items may be discussed in Executive Session:

11. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to go into Executive Session at 9:10p.m. under RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (2) for Teacher Contract Negotiations. The Committee, being polled individually, voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Giuliani

Secretary